

Board of County Commissioners
Escambia County, Florida



PANDEMIC INFLUENZA
EMERGENCY PLAN

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OVERVIEW

Escambia County is responsible for providing services to all of the citizens of Escambia County. The potential Pandemic Influenza could disrupt the continuity of operations for provision of essential and other community services, including governmental and businesses functions. Should that occur, the Escambia County Board of County Commissioners may proclaim a county emergency.

The typical “seasonal flu” is separate and apart from pandemic influenza. Pandemic influenza could strike at any time. A flu pandemic is a global outbreak that occurs when a new influenza A virus causes serious human illness and spreads easily from person to person. Continuity of operations (COOP) planning at the state and local government level mirrors Federal guidance to ensure the continuation of services to each level of government’s communities and constituents. Such planning for an influenza pandemic must recognize that the next pandemic may come in waves, each lasting weeks or months, and pass through communities of all sizes across the United States and around the world.

Unlike many other catastrophic events, an influenza pandemic will not directly affect the physical infrastructure of an organization. While a pandemic will not damage power lines, banks, or computer networks, it will ultimately threaten all critical infrastructure by its impact on an organization’s human resources by removing essential personnel from the workplace for weeks or months. Employers should include consideration for protecting the health and safety of employees during a pandemic in their business continuity planning.

If the Pandemic Influenza spreads to Escambia County, a cumulative absentee rate of up to or more than 25-30% of County employees is expected for up to 6 months, on a rolling basis. The Federal Government recommends that government entities plan with the assumption that up to 40 percent of their staff may be absent for periods of about two weeks at the height of a pandemic wave with lower levels of staff absent for a few weeks on either side of the peak. This number includes sick employees, employees who are caring for sick family members and employees who do not come to work out of fear of becoming ill. In addition, there may be a significant need for social distancing (a reduction of the number of persons concentrated in the workplace), necessitating that employees complete production but do not report to the workplace.

Emergency staffing and backfill of existing positions will be of primary concern in order to provide essential services and other services to the public. In the event that essential services are adequately staffed, non-essential services may be staffed, to the extent possible.

Approximately one third of Escambia County employees are represented by two labor unions, ATU and PBA. In the event that a Pandemic Influenza emergency is proclaimed,

the temporary suspension of all collective bargaining agreement provisions will be necessary.

This plan is drafted such that it can be used immediately. It is meant to compliment bureau operational plans. This manual does not limit bureau authority to make operational decisions as to essential or needed functions.

This manual provides staffing strategies, tools, advice and directives that bureaus should follow in the event that the BCC proclaims a Pandemic Influenza emergency for the county. Of note, is the fact that many human resources processes may be simplified and the administration functions narrowed in order to meet exigent staffing needs. The effect of the provisions of this manual confer no new privilege, right of appeal, right of position, transfer, demotion, promotion nor reinstatement for any County employee, contract worker or volunteer. This manual does not constitute an express or implied contract.

PLAN SUMMARY

- Labor Relations – Emergency Administration: The temporary suspension of collective bargaining agreement provisions will be necessary. Most likely, new provisions concerning assignment of work, scheduling and notice will be implemented.
- Closure of Schools and Daycare Facilities: Healthy employees may need to remain at home to care for healthy children or other healthy dependants if schools and daycare facilities are closed. First responders and emergency critical employees (those employees who exercise civil authority and maintain the safety and well-being of county citizens) are required to report to work; emergency essential personnel will need to report to work; unassigned emergency manpower pool and CIC personnel may use accrued leave time; sick leave may not be used. All employees with school-aged children are encouraged to pre-plan for potential school closures.
- Essential functions, Lines of Succession and Delegation of Authority: Bureaus must identify essential functions and inform employees. Payroll and human resources functions are essential in every bureau. Management lines of succession may run seven to ten employees deep. Bureaus must identify, protect, and ensure the ready availability of electronic and hardcopy documents, references, records, and information systems to support essential functions. Pandemic influenza planning must also identify and ensure the integrity of vital systems that require periodic maintenance or other direct physical intervention by employees.
- Alternative Work Schedules: Normal and alternative work schedules may change with as much notice as possible or little as an hour's notice.

- Contingent Workforce: Bureaus should pre-plan and identify areas where contingent workers may be needed – contract workers, short-term temporary and term-limited temporary.
- Special Duty Assignments: Email may be used as the approval process for assigning special duty since it is faster than the current process. Employees will receive the usual pay for the majority of duties performed in a higher classification and their usual base pay for duties performed in a lower classification.
- Volunteer Services: Volunteers may be utilized after bureaus have attempted to staff functions with employees. Volunteers will need to sign a waiver and release.
- Rescission of Approved Executive Leave, Vacation Leave and Compensatory Time Off: In order to staff county functions, recession of approved leave time is a possibility and employees must be informed that this may occur.
- Sending Ill Employees Home: Employees who are symptomatic in the workplace may be sent home and may use any type of accrued leave to cover the absence.
- Family Medical Leave and Sick Leave: These will continue to be administered as usual. Employees may use sick leave for medical appointments.
- Return to Work Authorization: Medical certifications will not be required but, if an employee who returns to work is symptomatic, the employee will be sent back home.
- Leave Donation: This will continue to be administered as usual.
- Facility Closure/Alternate Facilities: Regular employees will continue to be paid if a facility closes and the county will analyze the most appropriate place to utilize the affected employees.
- Discipline – Conduct Including Unauthorized Absences: The processing of proposed discipline may need to be held in abeyance if management's time is monopolized due to responding to the emergency. All discipline will be administered at the first opportunity.
- Communication and Consistent Messaging: Bureaus must prepare their employee communications plans in advance. All other communication must be in coordination with the PIO manager.
- Employee Assistance Program: Supervisors will be provided with current information on these services at the time of the emergency and will be encouraged to refer employees.

Section 1

Labor Relations – Emergency Administration

In the event that a Pandemic Influenza emergency is proclaimed by the Health Department the Escambia County Board of County Commissioners may declare a state of emergency which will allow for the **suspension of certain collective bargaining agreement provisions** in order to staff and administer the functions of a bureaus, division and/or work unit.

Provisions suspended may include but are not limited to those which deal with:

- Scheduling
- Notification procedures
- Assignment of work

To the extent possible, compensation provisions will not be suspended but may be streamlined in order to administer payroll in a timely manner.

The following provides guidelines in the administration of collective bargaining agreements to follow in the event an emergency is proclaimed:

A. Guiding Principles

1. Should a Pandemic Influenza emergency be proclaimed, **emergency administration of collective bargaining agreements** will be invoked where:
 - a. The Escambia County Board of County Commissioners has proclaimed a temporary emergency;
 - b. The emergency threatens to impair county operations;
 - c. The need to address the threat results in an unavoidable suspension of collective bargaining agreement provisions;
 - e. Suspension of collective bargaining agreement provisions is limited to the duration of the Pandemic Influenza emergency.
2. The provisions of the respective collective bargaining agreement that are temporarily suspended due to the emergency should be those that:
 - a. Ensure that functions of the unit can be staffed safely;
 - b. Have the least disruptive effect on bargaining unit employees; and
 - c. Have the least disruptive effect on non-bargaining unit employees.
3. Managers and supervisors should follow the provisions of collective bargaining agreements to the extent possible, without causing too much difficulty in administering a work unit during the emergency.

4. Managers and supervisors should provide as much notice to employees as possible, given the circumstances, of any change affecting employees.
5. In the event that emergency is proclaimed, managers and supervisors should refer to the Human Resources Division **to assist** in using these guidelines.

B. Communicate to employees that certain provisions of their respective collective bargaining agreement have been suspended.

For instance, the Pandemic Influenza emergency may result in high absentee rates resulting in the loss of the necessary number of employees to perform the identified functions of the work unit. The employee absentee rate may reach a point where, in order to perform the functions of the work unit, it is necessary to **use employees outside of the bargaining unit to perform the work.**

Some other examples are:

1. Previously approved vacation, compensatory time, leave of absences (other than for sick or family leave purposes) may be rescinded with minimal notice.
2. Employees may be required to report for work with minimal notice.
3. Employees' work schedules and/or hours of work may change with minimal notice.
4. Employees may be assigned overtime with minimal notice.
5. Employees may be assigned special duty with minimal notice.
6. Employees may be assigned to other work units with minimal notice.

C. Pay and Break Periods

1. **Compensation** will be paid in accord with the respective collective bargaining agreements or HR policies, as appropriate, for all work performed.
2. **Rest and Meal Periods** will be administered in accordance with the employees' labor agreement, if possible. Should exigent circumstances exist where meal periods cannot be taken, employees will continue to be paid and allowed to eat as appropriate.

D. Contract Negotiations and Administration

During the period of the emergency, the county may temporarily **suspend collective bargaining** negotiations, grievance processing and labor-management committee meetings.

Section 2

Closure of Schools and Daycare Facilities

Significant issue: First responders and emergency critical employees must report to work.

Preplanning: Staff should be informed of expectations; employees should have a family care succession plan in place; emergency essential employees may have to work an alternate schedule to perform duties and should be equipped to do so in advance.

To minimize the effect of any disease outbreak, the Local Health Officer for Public Health is authorized to order disease control measures that include a broad array of actions. Isolation and quarantine orders and social distancing measures are likely to be used in a pandemic influenza event. In addition to closing large social gatherings, such as sporting events, theater shows, concerts and others, the Local Health Officer may close schools and large day care centers as a social distancing strategy. It is anticipated that this action would occur in coordination with any emergency proclamation that may emanate from the executive. School and daycare closure is expected to have a significant cascading effect on staff absenteeism in both the private and public sectors. Escambia County must be prepared for a reduction in its staff resulting from healthy parents staying home to take care of healthy children or other healthy dependants.

In the event that this occurs, staff should be informed of expectations, depending upon their bureau designation as first responders and emergency critical employees (employees who exercise civil authority and maintain the safety and well-being of county citizens), emergency essential personnel, CIC and emergency manpower pool personnel. If schools and daycare centers are closed, employees will **not be allowed to bring their children to work**.

- A. First Responders/Emergency Critical:** must report to work, notwithstanding school and daycare closures.
 - 1. All first responders should have a family care succession plan in place.
- B. Emergency Essential Personnel:** should make every effort to report to work in the event of school and daycare closures.
 - 1. All essential personnel should have a family care succession plan in place.
 - 2. In the event that child and dependant care coverage may become impossible, notifications should be made with bureau management. Personnel may use accrued vacation leave, accrued compensatory time, holiday leave or may request approval for leave without pay for such an absence. Sick leave may not be used by healthy parents who are staying home to take care of healthy children or other healthy dependants due to lack of day care arrangements.

C. Emergency Manpower Pool/CIC Personnel: all non-assigned personnel should make every effort to report to work in the event of school and daycare closures.

1. All personnel should have a family care succession plan in place.
2. In the event that child and dependant care coverage becomes impossible, non-assigned personnel shall use leave in accordance with the Board of County Commissioners Policies and the Human Resources Policies and Procedures, i.e., employees are required to use accrued compensatory leave prior to using annual leave, paid time off (PTO) leave or MOB leave. When all leave has been exhausted, leave without pay may be requested. Sick leave or ELB leave may not be used by healthy parents who are staying home to take care of healthy children or other healthy dependants due to lack of daycare arrangements.

Section 3

Essential Functions, Lines of Succession and Delegation of Authority

The following section provides guidance and direction to assist all bureaus, divisions and work units to develop plans for identifying essential functions, lines of management succession and delegation of authority in the event of a Pandemic Influenza emergency.

- A. Bureaus shall identify the conditions that activate the plan. For example, the Escambia County BCC has proclaimed an emergency; *or* although a county emergency has not been proclaimed, a Bureau Chief has received authority from the County Administrator to activate the plan because the Influenza Pandemic has negatively impacted the business continuity of his or her bureau.
- B. Bureaus shall **predetermine first responder functions, emergency critical, emergency essential and non-assigned status**; including critical times of year when certain functions must be performed (the discharge of certain essential work may be specific to the time of season, year or month or dependent on other factors directly affecting the function).
 - 1. Bureaus shall **predetermine personnel** who perform first responder functions, emergency critical, emergency essential and non-essential functions and the minimum number of staff necessary to perform the functions.
 - 2. Bureaus shall identify functions that may be suspended while personnel are assigned to more critical roles. Bureaus should identify the time period that the function can be suspended and the functions that may be done on a less frequent basis than would occur under normal conditions.
 - 3. Bureaus should identify **secondary personnel** that have the skills and abilities to perform other functions. Such personnel may be:
 - a. Employees in the same classification series as those who normally perform the function;
 - b. Employees who have previously performed the work and are currently employed elsewhere in organizations within the county; and
 - c. Employees who can be trained either in advance of the need or on-the-job when the need arises.
 - 4. Bureaus should identify other personnel who may be available to perform the essential functions. Such personnel may include **retired employees, former employees, temporary workers and contract workers**.
 - 5. Each bureau **shall predetermine the payroll function as an essential function** and shall have a plan of succession and cross-training for the

payroll function. There should be *at least 3 employees* who are trained to perform the payroll function.

6. Each bureau **shall predetermine the human resources management function as an essential function** and shall have a plan of succession and cross-training for the human resource management function. There should be *at least 3 employees* who are trained to perform the human resources management function.
- C. Bureaus, divisions and work units shall establish a **management line of succession plan**. A line of succession provides a list of predetermined alternates for key leadership positions in each bureau, division or work unit.
1. The succession plan should be up to **7 to 10 employees in depth**, where possible. The personnel identified for the line of succession should know the operations of the work unit; have the confidence of the principal to act in his or her absence; clearly understand the scope of the powers and duties delegated to him or her; and clearly understand the constraints, if any, of the powers and authorities she or he will be delegated.
 2. The succession plan should clearly **identify the names of designated personnel** and their regular titles and how they can be contacted. (Consider having the principal's phone, work cell-phone, pager and email forwarded to the person who assumes the powers and duties of the principal in his/her absence.)
 3. The names and **order of succession** of designated personnel shall be *communicated* to division and work unit personnel.
 4. The plan should clearly set forth the powers and duties that will be performed and by whom. The bureaus shall predetermine the individuals who will have the **delegated authority** to make decisions and *communicate* that these individuals will have that authority to division and work unit personnel.
 5. If all of the personnel identified for the line of succession are unavailable (which may be the case in small work units where there is a limited number of leadership personnel), the bureau should provide for **alternate lines of succession** that identifies other personnel who can assume the powers and duties outside of the work unit. The line of succession plan should be updated whenever a pertinent staff change occurs.
 6. Bureaus should determine if those in the line of succession may need to be **cross-trained** in advance and provide such training where needed. Advance cross-training for essential functions, *such as the payroll function*, is imperative. The bureau may provide resources which may be

accessed to train employees to perform other functions (video tapes, outside trainers, procedures manuals, teleconferencing, consultants, etc.).

7. Bureaus should construct a method by which those in the line of succession will have **access to information** and needed items (*i.e.* computer passwords, calendars for employee approved time off, office keys, file cabinet keys, etc.) should they take over leadership responsibilities.
8. Succession plans shall be documented by divisions and/or work units and forwarded to the bureau chief. Copies shall be provided by the bureau chief to the Human Resources Division.

Section 4


Alternative Work Schedules

Major consideration: Overtime is probable and should be expected.

Pre-planning: Agencies to review their normal business hours and work schedules to determine if they can be modified and staffed with personnel on alternative schedules.

The administration of alternative work schedules will be modified during a proclaimed Pandemic Influenza emergency to enhance social distancing, business continuity or other pandemic response goals as follows:

- A. In addition to regular full-time employees, **regular part-time and temporary employees** may work alternative schedules. The **administration of alternative work schedules will be modified** during a proclaimed Pandemic Influenza emergency to enhance social distancing, business continuity or other pandemic response goals as follows:
- B. Bureaus shall **review their normal business hours and work schedules** to determine if they can be modified in a manner that best promotes social distancing, business continuity or other pandemic response goals during an emergency.
- C. Bureaus will identify first responder functions, essential functions and non-essential functions that may be staffed with personnel on alternative schedules.
- D. If feasible, supervisors should first ask for employees to **volunteer** to work hours other than their usual schedule. Where certain work schedules cannot be staffed with volunteers, bureau management may direct staff to work the schedules necessary.
- E. **Regular work schedules may be changed** by a supervisor subject to a 24 hour cancellation notice, when possible, upon the proclamation of a Pandemic Influenza emergency. If less than a 24 hour notice is necessary, bureau management may make such changes.
- F. **Alternative work schedules may be changed** by a supervisor subject to a 24 hour cancellation notice upon the declaration of a Pandemic Influenza emergency, when possible. If less than a 24 hour notice is necessary, bureau management may make such changes.
- G. Bureaus are encouraged to work with staff to minimize the impacts of decisions affecting schedule changes. Overtime is probable and should be expected.
- H. Alternative work schedules may be processed via email, fax or telephone. Approved schedules shall also be **formally documented**. Such documentation should occur within one week of the start of an alternative schedule or as soon as practicable thereafter. A supervisor may document the change via email, memorandum, or fax.

- I. If an employee makes a request for an alternative work schedule and the request is denied, **no written explanation** of why the request has been denied is required during the proclaimed emergency.
 - J. When appropriate, management may assign an employee back to the employee's regular schedule.
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Section 5

Contingent Workforce

Major consideration: Hiring the contingent worker must still be documented.

Preplanning: Bureaus must preplan and identify classifications which may be needed during an emergency so that they may more quickly staff their work units.

Monitoring contingent workers (CW's) is a joint responsibility of the bureau and the Human Resources Division. Monitoring CW's also involves the authorized vendor for CW's. It is the responsibility of the bureau to obtain any necessary approval prior to submitting a contingent worker request.

The majority of **CW's** used in the County are in the administrative, financial, and information technology fields. Vendors will be identified by Human Resources and provided to the Bureau Chiefs.

During a Pandemic Influenza emergency phase:

Bureaus may **go directly to the CW agency** to hire the classifications identified. Bureaus remain responsible for coding CWs' hours during the Pandemic Influenza emergency.

However, every three months during a Pandemic Influenza emergency, bureaus that employ contract workers should contact the Human Resources Division and check to see if and when normal processes will resume.

No Position Description Questionnaire (PDQ) will be required during the period of a proclaimed Pandemic Influenza emergency. A PDQ will be required for any new position that continues after the emergency is declared at an end.

During a Pandemic Influenza emergency, **New Employee Orientation** will not be required. New regular – fulltime employees shall attend New Employee Orientation as soon as practicable after the Pandemic Influenza emergency is declared over (7 days after the Pandemic Influenza emergency is declared over would be ideal). In all cases, bureaus should contact the Benefits section to obtain alternative plan enrollment methods.

Section 6

Special Duty Assignments

Preplanning: Bureaus should identify areas where special duty assignments are expected to occur.

Any division, with the prior written approval of the bureau chief and the Human Resources Manager, or his or her designee, may temporarily assign an employee to an existing higher-level classification when the higher-level duties and responsibilities comprise the majority of the work performed.

Special duty may be appropriate for an employee assigned to perform duties and responsibilities that are outside of the scope of his/her current classification if the higher level duties, as described in an existing classification, are of a temporary nature and comprise the majority of the work being performed.

Special duty may be assigned under the following conditions:

To backfill a vacancy created when another employee is on leave for a medical disability, as required for reasonable accommodation under the state or federal law, on leave for military duty or other approved leave of absence.

To perform higher-level work either directly or backfilling for another employee when the work is related to a project that has a definite termination date.

The maximum period of special duty is six months [when approved by the Human Resources Manager or designee]. A special duty assignment may be extended to a maximum of twelve months if authorized in advance in writing by the division manager and the Human Resources Manager before the expiration of the initial six-month period. Any further extensions must be authorized in writing in advance by the bureau chief and the County Administrator, based upon a specific determination that a special duty assignment continues to meet the requirements stated in this chapter and that a position reclassification is not appropriate. Such cases shall only include back-filling for a regular position when an incumbent employee is absent because of an extended leave of absence for a medical disability, as required under reasonable accommodation provisions of applicable state or federal law, or is on military reserve duty. Additionally, an extension may be allowed for performance of a project when a higher level of work has a definite termination date.

Special duty assignments may not exceed two years in duration.

A special duty assignment is **defined** as a temporary assignment of an employee to an existing higher-level classification when the higher-level duties and responsibilities comprise the majority of the work performed.

- A. Only in the event that an employee is **assigned to higher level duties for 14 calendar days will they be paid special duty**. Special duty pay is not appropriate where an employee is simply assigned different duties which are not

higher level duties or where an employee is simply assigned to work in a different work unit if the work performed there are not higher level duties.

- B. Employees may be assigned to perform **duties of an equal or lower classification**, without reduction in base pay.
- C. Should a Pandemic Influenza emergency be declared, assignments to special duty involving higher pay will continue to be made prospectively but approvals and notification to the employee may be made prior to the commencement of the assignment either **via e-mail or phone**.
1. An assignment to special duty may be made via e-mail, memorandum or fax only for the duration of the proclaimed emergency.
 2. **Where an email, memorandum or fax is used:**
 - For an initial request of **6 months** or less, the email originates with the employee's supervisor, manager or the bureau chief and is emailed to the Human Resources Manager or his or her designee. The HRD or his or her designee may approve or deny the request by simply replying to the email.
 - For the first extension request of **7-12 months**, the email originates with the employee's supervisor or manager and is emailed to the Human Resources Division Manager or his or her designee. The Human Resources Division Manager may approve or deny the request by simply replying to the email.

For the second extension request of **13-18 months**, the email originates with the employee's supervisor or manager and is emailed to Human Resources for routing to the County Administrator. The County Administrator or his or her designee may approve or deny the request by simply replying to the email.

For the third and final extension request of **18-24 months**, the email originates with the employee's supervisor or manager and is emailed to Human Resources for routing to the county Administrator. The County Administrator or his or her designee may approve or deny the request by simply replying to the email.

Section 7

Volunteer Services

Major consideration: Individuals may not volunteer to do what they are otherwise paid by the county to do.

Significant issue: Volunteers must sign a waiver and release.

Preplanning: Bureaus should compile a list of potential volunteers.

During a Pandemic Influenza emergency, bureaus may wish to utilize the services of volunteers. Generally, volunteers are individuals who perform hours of service for the county for civic, charitable or humanitarian reasons.

- A. Bureaus should first attempt to utilize the County employees to perform needed work and then look to volunteers.
- B. Bureaus should **identify areas where volunteers might be utilized in advance** and identify the type of **skills** that volunteers will need to be useful in that area. Bureaus should then compile a list of possible volunteers.
 - 1. Bureaus may be contacted by individuals who want to volunteer but are not needed or do not possess the needed skills. Bureaus should preplan on how to communicate to such individuals that their offer to volunteer is appreciated but that the bureau cannot utilize their services.
- C. Bureaus may include as volunteers any individual who volunteers to perform services for the bureau if the following **conditions** are met:
 - 1. The individual receives no compensation or is paid expenses, reasonable benefits, or a nominal fee to perform the services for which the individual volunteered. The individual must perform services without any kind of promise or expectation or receipt of compensation for the services rendered.
 - 2. Such services are not the same type of services which the individual is employed to perform for the county's executive branch bureaus. Individuals may not volunteer to do what they are otherwise paid by the county to do.
 - 3. The volunteer must sign a waiver and release prior to performing volunteer services.

► ***A Volunteer Services Waiver and Release is attached at the end of this section.***

VOLUNTEER SERVICES WAIVER AND RELEASE

The undersigned, on behalf of themselves and their estate, hereby waives any right of recovery and releases Escambia County, their officers, officials, employees and agents, from liability arising from any injury to Undersigned, arising from or out of the Undersigned's activities and participation in volunteer services at the Escambia County ***[INSERT BUREAU AND DIVISION NAME]***.

The Undersigned further acknowledges and agrees that Escambia County does not assume any responsibility whatsoever for any property of the Undersigned and the Undersigned shall not hold the county liable for any loss or damage to same. The Undersigned give their permission to be photographed and have their image used in County publications. Signature: _____
Date: _____

For youth under 18 years of age: _____ (print)
has my permission to accept an assignment as a volunteer for Escambia County.

Signature of Guardian: _____ Date: _____

Section 8

Rescission of Approved Leave and Compensatory Time Off

Major recommended changes: *Process.* There will be no requirement that an employee must actually have a request for vacation denied before carryover of unused vacation is approved.

Preplanning: Managers and supervisors should keep an updated calendar of all approved time off and provide access of that calendar to those in their line of succession.

Because the Pandemic Influenza emergency may cause significant staffing shortages, previously approved executive leave, vacation leave and compensatory time off may be rescinded in order to provide staffing coverage for county services. The ability to rescind previously approved vacation leave and compensatory time off currently exists in the event of business need.

Supervisors, managers and chiefs should note the following:

- A. Managers and supervisors should keep an **updated calendar of all approved time off** and provide access of that calendar to those in their line of succession.
- B. Executive leave, vacation and/or compensatory time off should only be rescinded where the supervisor is unable to adequately staff a work unit or project.
- C. Executive leave, vacation and/or compensatory time off should be rescinded as soon as the supervisor believes that a potential staffing shortage will require that the employee report to work.
- D. Prior to rescinding previously approved vacation leave or compensatory time off, the supervisor should **attempt to staff the unit or project through other available means** (*i.e.*, seek available staff to volunteer for the work or staff with other available employees or contract workers).
- E. Rescission of an employee's leave which is already in progress shall be **reasonably based upon the employee's ability to report to work.**

For example, it would be reasonable to require that an employee who is on vacation at home report to work but unreasonable to require that an employee who is on vacation out of the country report to work.

- F. When rescinding vacation and/or compensatory time off, the **supervisor shall have actual contact with the employee** to ensure that the employee received the directive to report to duty. Rescission should be made in writing, if possible.

For example, an email exchange between the employee and the supervisor or a letter from the supervisor to the employee in which the employee acknowledges

receipt is acceptable contact; a message left on an employee's home telephone message recorder is not an acceptable contact, unless the message was left and employee returned the call acknowledging the directive.

- G. Should the need for an employee to work during pandemic influenza emergency result in the employee going beyond the maximum accrual amount of annual leave or PTO leave, the employee may submit a written request for an extension to use the leave at a later time through the Human Resources Manager to the County Administrator for consideration and approval. Employees who are granted this extension shall have ninety (90) days from the date of approval to take the leave.
- H. While employees who have accrued compensatory time off have a right to use it within a reasonable time of their request, such may not be the case in the event of an emergency, such as the Pandemic Influenza, where an employee's absence would disrupt County business operations. Should rescission of compensatory time off due to a proclaimed Pandemic Influenza emergency occur, the appointing authority may submit a recommendation to the Human Resources Manager that the employee be allowed to **carryover accrued compensatory time**. Compensatory hours that have been carried over shall be used within the first quarter of the new calendar year.

Should, at year end, an employee have accrued compensatory time that is not carried over, it will be paid to the employee.

Section 9

Sending Ill Employees Home

Major recommended changes: *Training.* Managers and supervisors already have the right to send ill employees home.

Major consideration: Safety considerations will drive a decision to send an employee home.

Significant issue: Employees who decline to leave the workplace when directed to may be subject to some level of corrective or disciplinary action.

Preplanning: Training of supervisors should include a reminder that they have the authority to send ill employees home and that sick leave is meant to cover such an absence.

- A. If an employee who is staffing operations appears to have the Pandemic Influenza at the workplace, supervisors have the authority to **require the employee to leave the workplace.**

As a **safety consideration**, management should look to the physical well-being of its employees and whether the health of fellow employees is endangered by the health of an ill employee. Such is the case where an employee is exhibiting symptoms of the Pandemic Influenza because an ill employee may endanger the health of fellow employees.

Supervisors should first seek the approval of their manager or chief prior to sending an ill employee home.

- B. Supervisors are not to make judgments as to medical diagnosis but may rely on observations of an employee's symptom logy in making a determination to send an employee who appears ill home. **Symptoms** of flu in humans may be:

- Fever
- Cough
- Sore throat
- Muscle aches
- Watery Eyes
- Acute respiratory distress

- C. An employee may use sick leave for the employee's bona fide illness or incapacitating injury or the employee's exposure to contagious diseases.

- D. **Paid administrative leave is not available to an employee who is being sent home because of exhibiting symptoms of pandemic influenza.**

- E. When the employee's condition improves to the point where the employee no longer poses a health hazard to fellow employees, the employee shall contact his or her supervisor and arrange for the employee's **return to work.**

Section 10

Family Medical Leave and Sick Leave

Major recommended changes: All bureaus must allow sick leave to be used for medical and dental appointments.

Major consideration: The administration of family medical leave must continue in accord with current legal requirements.

Significant issue: None.

Preplanning: Bureaus need to assure that family medical leave administration is encompassed in the essential human resource management functions.

Escambia County employees may use medical leave pursuant to their current rights under the Human Resources Policies and Procedures. During the Pandemic Influenza emergency, the necessity for supporting employees seeking medical assistance will be crucial. If bureaus are not already allowing sick leave for medical and dental appointments they shall permit it.

Stay home if you are sick with influenza-like illness for example, fever or chills AND cough or sore throat. In addition, symptoms of flu can include runny nose, body aches, headache, tiredness, diarrhea, or vomiting. It is recommended that sick workers stay home if they are ill with influenza like illness until at least 24 hours after they are free of fever (100 F or greater) or signs of a fever without the use of fever-reducing medication. This would require employees to stay home for 3-5 days in most cases. CDC recommends this time period away from work regardless of whether or not antiviral medications are used.

Section 11

Return to Work Authorization

Major recommended changes: *Procedural.* During a Pandemic Influenza emergency, as a general rule, medical certifications for return to work will not be required if related to influenza; employees may be required to return to different work sites and to different work duties.

Major consideration: Employees may be returning to duties outside of their bargaining unit or of another bargaining unit and bureaus will need to consult with Human Resources if this becomes an issue.

Significant issue: Educating managers and HR practitioners on symptomology of influenza will be critical.

Preplanning: Managerial and HR practitioner training.

In the event the County Administrator declares a Pandemic Influenza emergency, the following procedures will be in effect for the duration of the emergency.

Returning from Leave: In the event that an employee is ready to return to work from a leave (paid, unpaid, or military) the following procedures shall apply:

- A. The employee who is ready to return from leave shall **contact his/her supervisor** (or a person acting in his/her capacity) for instructions on when and where the employee should return for assignment, provided an assignment is available prior to the day that the employee proposes to return. Contact shall be made in the manner deemed appropriate by the work unit.
- B. The supervisor shall **inform the employee** as to whether or not the employee's return to work is authorized. If it is authorized, the employee should be informed of his/her work location (or whether the employee will be assigned to work from a remote location), work schedule and shift, and specific work assignments, if different from the employee's regular assignment.
- C. The supervisor can authorize the employee to return to work if they have not displayed influenza like symptoms for at least 24 hours after they are free of fever (100 F or greater) or signs of a fever without the use of fever-reducing medication. CDC recommends a 3-5 day time period away from work regardless of whether or not antiviral medications are used.
- D. After the emergency, the requirements for the employee to provide a medical release/return to work verification form from a health care professional will be restored, unless otherwise notified by the employee's supervisor.

Section 12

Facility Closure

Major recommended changes: *None*. The county may consider facility closures as necessary to meet business needs.

Major consideration: Decisions as to facility closures will be made on a case-by-case basis, in conjunction with the Human Resources Division and the County Administrator's office.

Administrative offices and County operations **will remain open** during emergency situations that do not pose an immediate life, health, or safety risk to its occupants **unless directed otherwise** by the County Administrator or the Board of County Commissioners.

Because of potential staffing shortages, employees may be deployed to provide support for varied county operations in alternative worksites and should expect to come to work.

In the case of closure of specific offices, employees will be sent home as a last resort. Should employees be sent home, **payment of wages** to employees will be made in accordance with the established emergency processes.

- A. If a **facility is closed** by order of the County Administrator and no alternative site is designated for all employees who report to work, they will be paid their normal pay for the day and then must take leave until such time as the facility is reopened or alternative worksites are arranged.
1. Employees who, prior to a facility closure, have previously requested and have been **approved for time off** (*e.g.*, vacation, sick leave, compensatory time off, MOB leave, leave of absence) will have hours deducted from their accruals as approved in accordance with established policies.
 2. **Temporary** (other than provisional, probationary and term-limited temporary), student assistants, and non-regular part time employees will be paid only for hours actually worked during a facility closure.
 3. Employees designated as **first responder employees** who are unable to report to work will have their time charged to vacation, compensatory time (FLSA overtime non-exempt hourly), MOB leave (FLSA exempt) or leave without pay unless the bureau chief or designee determines that regular pay is warranted and waives the charging of the time missed.

4. If the facility closes after the start of an employee's shift, employees who are scheduled to report to work but do not report to work and do not contact the appointing authority or designee prior to a facility closure are considered to have been **absent without leave** and will be subject to leave without pay for the full day. However, the appointing authority may at his or her discretion authorize the use of vacation, compensatory time or executive leave for the absence as individual circumstances warrant.
- B. **When any bureau or division closes operations in his or her office during the work day or orders employees to leave the premises because of safety concerns, employees (regular, provisional, probationary and term-limited temporary) scheduled to work will be paid for the normally scheduled work day.**
- C. Bureaus should make every reasonable effort to **allow employees who have reported to work to check on the status of their families**, providing that doing so does not compromise emergency response functions.

Section 13

Discipline – Conduct, Including Unauthorized Absences

Major recommended changes: *Procedural.* Processing of disciplinary actions may need to be held in abeyance pending a return to normal business operations.

Major consideration: First responders who are absent without leave are held to a higher standard than other employees in analyzing disciplinary action.

Significant issue: Certain absences (other than pandemic flu situations) without approved leave for more than 3 days may subject an employee to termination. Administrative leave remains available for bureaus to utilize when bureaus determine that an employee should not return to work pending the outcome of the disciplinary process.

Preplanning: Employees should be informed of the expectation that they report to work and that the consequence for not doing so is potential disciplinary action.

Escambia County's commitment to public service will be the cornerstone to holding the function of our community together. In order to fulfill service to the public, all able employees are expected to report to work and perform duties, unless directed otherwise. Held to the highest standard are **first responders** -- those are employees who exercise civil authority and maintain the safety and well-being of county citizens.

Unfortunately, there may be occasions during the emergency when employee misconduct or unexcused absenteeism arise and need to be addressed. In some cases, that will mean that discipline is appropriate.

- A. **Disciplinary Action, in General:** The type and level of disciplinary action will be determined by the nature and severity of the behavior and/or performance deficiency that led to the disciplinary action. Prior to proposing or implementing disciplinary action, managers and supervisors should first **consult** the Human Resources Division. The Human Resources Division will assist the bureau in a review of pertinent facts and decisions regarding when and if to process disciplinary action.
1. Any suspension or termination disciplinary proposal for an employee's misconduct will be reduced to a form of **written correspondence** (*e.g.* letter, email, facsimile) by the appointing authority and a copy will be provided to the employee. The correspondence will set forth the dates of the employee's alleged misconduct, noting when the proposal will be processed and when the employee will have an opportunity to be heard, as set forth below.
 2. Processing of disciplinary proposals for **non-exempt employees** who are alleged to have engaged in misconduct may be held in abeyance pending the county's return to normal business operations. **Administrative leave** remains available for bureaus to utilize when bureaus determine that a career service employee should not return to work pending the outcome of the disciplinary process.

3. Processing of disciplinary proposals for all **exempt employees** who are alleged to have engaged in misconduct may be conducted as soon as the bureau is able to do so or may be held in abeyance pending the county's return to normal business operations.
- B. **Disciplinary Action for Unauthorized Absences:** An unauthorized absence means the absence of an employee from duty without specific authorization. Authorization is obtained via the notification and approval method prescribed by the division or work unit. Certain unauthorized absences during a Pandemic Influenza emergency may result in a reduction in pay and/or disciplinary action, up to and including termination.
1. **Pay**
 - a. **Hourly employees** who are non-exempt from the overtime provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) and the Florida Minimum Wage Act will not be paid for any time that they are absent from work without approved leave.
 - b. Employees who are **exempt** from the overtime provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) and the Florida Minimum Wage Act will not be paid for any full work day that they are absent from work without approved leave.
 2. **Disciplinary Action**
 - a. **Hourly employees** may be subject to discipline, up to and including termination, for an unauthorized absence, the level of severity of which shall be dependent upon the length of the absence and whether they have been designated as a *first responder*. Should a suspension be imposed, the time period for the suspension may be in any increment, normally 1 to 30 days, depending upon the facts and circumstances.
 - b. **FLSA exempt employees** may be subject to discipline, up to and including termination, for an unauthorized absence, the level of severity of which shall be dependent upon the length of the absence and whether they have been designated as a first responder. Should a suspension be imposed, the time period for the suspension shall be in one week increments, normally 1 week to 4 weeks, depending upon the facts and circumstances.
 - c. Any suspension or termination disciplinary proposal for an employee's unapproved leave of absence will be reduced to a form of **written correspondence** (*e.g.* letter, email, facsimile) by the appointing authority and a copy will be provided to the employee. The correspondence will set forth the dates of the employee's

unapproved absence, noting when the proposal will be processed and when the employee will have an opportunity to be heard, as set forth below.

3. **Processing of disciplinary proposals for all employees** who are alleged to be absent without approved leave may be held in abeyance pending the county's return to normal business operations. **Administrative leave** remains available for bureaus to utilize when bureaus determine that a career service employee should not return to work pending the outcome of the disciplinary process.
4. **Processing of disciplinary proposals for exempt employees** (appointed, probationary, term-limited temporary, short term temporary) who are alleged to be absence without leave may be conducted as soon as the bureau is able to do so or may be held in abeyance pending the county's return to normal business operations.
5. **Mitigating circumstances** underlying the unauthorized absence may be taken into consideration in any analysis of disciplinary action proposals, including termination. Incidents will be reviewed on a **case-by-case basis**.
6. Should an employee's unauthorized absences from work for a period of three consecutive days be **sustained and no compelling mitigating circumstances exist**, such may be considered as **abandonment** of the employee's position with the county. An employee who abandons his or her position may be subject to termination.

Section 14

Communication and Consistent Messaging

Major recommended changes: *None.* This section sets forth many useful reminders and suggestions on effective communication.

Major consideration: None.

Significant issue: With the aid of all county agencies, bureaus and hiring authorities, Escambia County will be responsible for educating their employees and ensuring that communications personnel are trained for emergency communications.

Preplanning: Bureaus not only need to identify key internal and external stakeholders but the methods that will be used to communicate with them. Human Resources will need to communicate to labor unions and employees that certain provisions of their respective collective bargaining agreement may be suspended.

One of the key elements in responding to any disaster, including a Pandemic Influenza emergency, is effective and timely communication. Escambia County bureaus must plan their internal communications strategies *now*, before the crisis. Sound and thoughtful communications will be required before, during and after Pandemic Influenza emergency. This section provides guidance on internal communications planning and strategies.

When communicating with employees via media outlets, agencies should coordinate closely with their public information officers and the BCC's PIO to ensure county wide messages alignment.

- A. Understanding the **core values of communications** is a fundamental goal of the county's response to a Pandemic Influenza emergency. This goal is to provide clear, consistent, candid communications to employees and agencies. This goal applies to communications at every level, from the Administrator's Office to bureaus and divisions.
- As bureaus contemplate and develop communications, they should adhere to these **guidelines**: There will be a great demand for accurate and timely information that will provide guidance and ease anxiety. There will be a need to build and maintain trust.
 - Know your stakeholders, and develop a communications strategy for each one. Different types of information will need to be communicated to different audiences.
 - Basic messages may change over the duration of the emergency. Bureaus will need to develop a phased communications plan that can be partially or fully implemented as needed.

- B. Assessing bureau communications resources and needs -- Before a potential Pandemic Influenza emergency strikes, bureaus shall assess their communications strengths and weaknesses.

1. **Communications resources**

- Determine whether adequate human resources are available during all phases of a Pandemic Influenza emergency. Remember, a Pandemic Influenza emergency may last for several months. Bureaus must ensure that they will have the **people available to implement** a sustained communications plan. Prepare for resource contingencies by training staff for emergency communications responsibilities.
- Identify and communicate to others which employees have **authority to communicate** directly with employees.
- Identify which employees have **authority to issue news releases** or communicate with the media after coordinating with PIO Office.
- Schedule **crisis communication training** for all employees who will have a communications role.

2. **Communications needs**

- Annually review the Disaster Communications Plan.
- Develop policies to implement the communications plan and to deploy resources during a Pandemic Influenza emergency.
- Familiarize key management with available communications resources.
- Prepare basic templates and other communications materials in advance, and update them during a Pandemic Influenza emergency as needed.
- Monitor the effectiveness of communication messages, vehicles, and timing and refine them as necessary.

C. **By educating your employees through early and ongoing communications, bureaus can reassure their employees and assist in protecting their health.**

1. The county and bureaus should tell employees about the threat of a Pandemic Influenza emergency, and describe the steps they are taking to prepare for it.
2. The county and bureaus should communicate potential changes to personnel policies in response to a Pandemic Influenza emergency and must emphasize that these **changes apply only to the emergency response, not for routine operation.**
3. Bureaus should communicate changes in business culture in response to a Pandemic Influenza emergency. Changes may include social distancing, suspension of non-essential functions.

4. Bureaus should communicate the importance of staying home if employees are ill or have Pandemic Influenza symptoms.
5. Bureaus should **distribute practical information** on maintaining a healthy work environment. For example, the Department of Public Health and the Centers for Disease Control provide materials that demonstrate the simple steps employees can take to protect themselves and their families. Materials are also available that illustrate good respiratory hygiene and describe the signs and symptoms of the flu.

► *A Pandemic Flu Planning Checklist for Individuals and Families is attached at the end of this section.*

Bureaus should recognize that a Pandemic Influenza emergency may provide physical, social, and emotional challenges to employees. Morale building communications will be essential.

D. In order to maintain business continuity and **to ensure efficient communications**, bureaus should:

1. Identify and communicate the bureau's critical functions and the employees who can perform them. Build depth through **cross-training**. Keep in mind that absentee rates may top 25-30%, so build in the redundancy necessary to ensure that essential work will be done.
2. Ensure that authority (such as hiring or purchasing) is delegated to appropriate employees and that such authority is fully communicated.
3. Update employee phone lists and make sure management has access to up-to-date data.
4. Ask employees to update their emergency contact information.
5. Develop a list of union business representatives and provide that list to chiefs, managers and supervisors.
6. Ask for feedback and plan for disability accessibility requirements that may be necessary due to a Pandemic Influenza emergency. These requirements may include additional disability access services or translation services.
7. Ensure that essential reporting can be maintained. For example, bureaus should make sure that staff absenteeism can be monitored and reported.

- E. When developing a communication plan, bureaus should identify their key **internal stakeholders and the methods that will be used to communicate with them**. For most bureaus, these stakeholders will include:
1. **Employees.** As detailed earlier in this section, bureaus must establish on-going and frequent communications with employees. Plan to implement two or more communications methods which may include an Internet web site, central telephone number with pre-recorded information, central telephone number staffed by informed communications personnel, e-mails or hard copy (print) materials.
 2. **Bureau management.** Bureaus will need to communicate business continuity issues and changes to policies and procedures. Again, plan to implement two or more communications outlets to ensure the messages are received.
 3. **County management.** In addition to the “business as usual” communications required, bureaus may need to provide the Administrator’s Office or other agencies with a record of decisions made during a Pandemic Influenza emergency and other information such as employee absence rates.
- F. When developing a communication plan, bureaus should identify their key **external stakeholders and the methods that will be used to communicate with them**. For most bureaus, these stakeholders will include:
1. **Labor representatives.** Bureaus should work with their labor representatives and must establish on-going and frequent communications. Plan to implement two or more communications methods which may include an Internet web site, central telephone number with pre-recorded information, central telephone number staffed by informed communications personnel, e-mails or hard copy (print) materials.
 2. **The public.** Bureaus and agencies will need to communicate business continuity issues and changes to policies and procedures. Again, plan to implement two or more communications vehicles to ensure the messages are received.
 3. **Vendors.** Bureaus should establish a system to insure delivery of necessary items and a method of restocking these items at crucial points in time.

Pandemic Flu Planning Checklist for Individuals and Families

(from the Department of Health and Human Services)

You can prepare for an influenza pandemic now. You should know both the magnitude of what can happen during a pandemic outbreak and what actions you can take to help lessen the impact of an influenza pandemic on you and your family. This checklist will help you gather the information and resources you may need in case of a flu pandemic.

1. To plan for a pandemic:

- ☐ Store a supply of water and food. During a pandemic, if you cannot get to a store, or if stores are out of supplies, it will be important for you to have extra supplies on hand. This can be useful in other types of emergencies, such as power outages and disasters.
- ☐ Ask your doctor and insurance company if you can get an extra supply of your regular prescription drugs.
- ☐ Have any nonprescription drugs and other health supplies on hand, including pain relievers, stomach remedies, cough and cold medicines, fluids with electrolytes and vitamins.
- ☐ Talk with family members and loved ones about how they would be cared for if they got sick or what will be needed to care for them in your home.
- ☐ Volunteer with local groups to prepare and assist with emergency response.
- ☐ Get involved in your community as it works to prepare for an influenza pandemic.

2. To limit the spread of germs and prevent infection:

- ☐ Teach your children to wash hands frequently with soap and water and model the correct behavior.
- ☐ Teach your children to cover coughs and sneezes with tissues and be sure to model that behavior.
- ☐ Teach your children to stay away from others as much as possible if they are sick. Stay home from work and school if sick.

3. Items to have on hand for an extended stay at home:

Examples of food and non-perishables

- ☐ Ready-to-eat canned meats, fruits, vegetables and soups
- ☐ Protein or fruit bars
- ☐ Dry cereal or granola
- ☐ Peanut butter or nuts
- ☐ Dried fruit
- ☐ Crackers
- ☐ Canned juices
- ☐ Bottled water
- ☐ Canned or jarred baby food and formula

Examples of medical, health, and emergency supplies

- ☐ Prescribed medical supplies such as glucose and blood-pressure monitoring equipment
- ☐ Soap and water or alcohol-based hand wash
- ☐ Medicines for fever, such as acetaminophen or ibuprofen
- ☐ Thermometer
- ☐ Anti-diarrheal medication
- ☐ Vitamins
- ☐ Fluids with electrolytes
- ☐ Cleansing agent/soap
- ☐ Flashlight
- ☐ Batteries
- ☐ Portable radio
- ☐ Manual can opener
- ☐ Garbage bags
- ☐ Tissues, toilet paper and disposable diapers

Section 15

Employee Assistance Program

Major recommended changes: *None.* These resources and the processes for contact already exist.

Major consideration: None.

Significant issue: None.

Preplanning: Pre-pandemic briefings may need to occur in order that managers and supervisors are prepared to address the employee stresses that may arise during a crisis and to know when a referral to EAP should occur.

Should a Pandemic Influenza emergency occur, referral to the Escambia County Employee Assistance Program (EAP) may be recommended to address personal problems that interfere with work performance. In particular, a crisis such as a Pandemic Influenza may cause stresses that compromise the effective functioning of a work unit. Further, there may be a need for “Critical Stress Debriefing Sessions” to assist a work unit with particular problems or traumatic events.

It is recommended that referral appointments to EAP during a Pandemic Influenza be allowed during regular working hours during the course of the emergency even if the bureau does not normally allow use of work time for such appointments, as long as this does not interfere with the operations or functions of the workplace.

A. Employee Assistance Program (EAP)

The EAP is a service provided through the Human Resources Division for all county employees, regardless of benefits eligibility or career service or temporary employment status. The program’s primary purpose is to assist employees and managers with personal problems that are interfering with work performance.

SECTION 16

PREPLANNING CHECKLIST

Determine Critical Functions and Personnel

- ☐ Predetermine personnel who perform first responder functions
- ☐ Predetermine personnel who perform essential functions
- ☐ Predetermine personnel who perform non-essential functions
- ☐ Identify functions that may be suspended while personnel are assigned to more critical roles
- ☐ Identify secondary personnel who have the skills and abilities to perform other functions
- ☐ Identify other personnel, such as retired employees, former employees, temporary workers, and contract workers, who may be available to perform essential functions
- ☐ Identify potential volunteers who have the skills to perform needed bureau functions

Succession Planning

- ☐ Predetermine the payroll function as an essential function and have at least 3 employees cross-trained for the payroll function
- ☐ Predetermine the human resources management function as an essential function and have at least 3 employees cross-trained for the human resources management function
- ☐ Establish and identify a 7 to 10 employee management line of succession plan which lists predetermined alternates for key leadership positions in each bureau, division or work unit
- ☐ Predetermine the individuals who will have the delegated authority to make decisions and *communicate* that succession plan to division and work unit personnel
- ☐ Provide for alternate lines of succession
- ☐ Provide for access to information and needed items to those in the line of succession (*i.e.* computer passwords, office keys, file cabinet keys, etc.)

- ☐ Forward document succession plans to the bureau chief

Review Business Hours, Work Schedules and Mode of Service Delivery

- ☐ Review business hours and work schedules to determine if they can be modified in a manner that best promotes social distancing, business continuity or other pandemic response goals during an emergency
- ☐ Identify essential functions that may be accomplished via email and/or voice communications
- ☐ Identify technical planning methods such as the World-Wide-Web, Virtual Private Network, Go to My PC, Instant Messenger and teleconferencing to be implemented prior to a Pandemic Influenza emergency
- ☐ Pre-complete forms

Develop a Communications Plan

- ☐ Communicate with employees about the threat of a Pandemic Influenza emergency, and describe the steps they are taking to prepare for it such as:
 - Potential changes to personnel policies located in this manual
 - Changes in business culture which may include social distancing, or suspension of non-essential functions
 - The importance of staying home if employees are ill or have influenza symptoms
- ☐ Distribute practical information on maintaining a healthy work environment
- ☐ Update employee emergency contact information
- ☐ Identify key internal and external stakeholders and the methods that will be used to communicate with them
- ☐ Communicate to labor unions and employees that certain provisions of their respective collective bargaining agreement may be suspended such as:
 - Use of employees outside of the bargaining unit to perform the work
 - Previously approved vacation, compensatory time, leave of absences may be rescinded with minimal notice
 - Employees may be required to report for work with minimal notice
 - Employees' work schedules and/or hours of work may change with minimal notice
 - Employees may be assigned overtime with minimal notice
 - Employees may be assigned special duty with minimal notice
 - Employees may be assigned to other work units with minimal notice

SECTION 17 INOCULATION PROTOCOLS FOR FIRST RESPONDERS

First responders are those employees that have trained and provide emergency medical care.

Extra precautions have been taken to provide employees with the needed personal protective equipment required for the field in which they work. These first responders through their daily duties will be subjected to direct patient contact of those that may be infected by the pandemic influenza.

Once a vaccine is available for distribution, the Escambia County Medical Director will make a request to the Escambia County Health Department for the required number of doses needed to inoculate those employees that meet the requirements of first responder.

The H1N1 vaccine will be made available to those first responders that wish to receive inoculations. Inoculations will be provided in-house and at no cost to the employee.

For those employees that are not first responders and wish to receive the inoculation, they will need to make the appropriate arrangements with their individual health care provider.